

## RACE UNITY DAY

**HON. PETER DEUTSCH**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 4, 1997*

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, there can be no greater cause in the United States of America today than the promotion of unity among the races. Recognition of unity in diversity is the foundation for true and lasting peace in our great country. Race unity is the most challenging issue facing our Nation. Only by achieving it can we aspire to exert moral leadership for peace among Nations.

June 8, 1977 marks the 38th annual observance of Race Unity Day, inaugurated by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States. The purpose of Race Unity Day is to focus our attention on the oneness of humankind and to celebrate our unity amidst our diversity. With its diverse ethnic and racial make up, the State of Florida is an excellent location for a state-wide celebration of this day.

The Honorable Lawton Chiles, Governor of the State of Florida, has proclaimed Sunday, June 8, 1977 as Race Unity Day in Florida. Many county commissioners and mayors are signing similar proclamations across the Sunshine State.

We commend the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States for inaugurating Race Unity Day 38 years ago. We also commend Baha'i communities, throughout Florida and other groups like NAACP in Key West, and Multi-Ethnic Advisory Board of Broward County for initiating and cosponsoring State-wide celebrations of Race Unity Day.

The text of the Proclamation of the Honorable Governor:

Whereas, the United States was founded and peopled by individuals of many different ethnic and racial origins; and

Whereas, our nation's Declaration of Independence articulates the credo upon which our nation was built, that all men and women are created equal; and

Whereas, we live in a world that makes universal peace our first priority if civilization is to survive and advance; and

Whereas, the United States of America has sought to serve as an example to other nations of the world; and

Whereas, the state of Florida has a population which represents highly diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds; and

Whereas, a free people must remain vigilant and mindful of the goals of achieving peace and unity among all peoples; and

Whereas, every individual is like a flower in the garden of humanity;

Now, therefore, I, Lawton Chiles, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the state of Florida, do hereby proclaim June 8, 1997, as Race Unity Day in Florida with the fervent hope that Americans everywhere will take this time to accept and wholeheartedly celebrate unity in diversity.

## IN RECOGNITION OF THE SEVENTH ANNUAL HALL OF FAME DINNER DANCE OF THE PORT WASHINGTON YOUTH ACTIVITIES

**HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 4, 1997*

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join with my constituents and the residents of Port Washington as they gather with the members of the Port Washington Youth Activities [PYA] in celebration of their Seventh Annual Hall of Fame Dinner Dance.

The PYA is a volunteer youth organization dedicated to supporting sports programs for youngsters between the ages of 6 and 14. The goal of the organization is to teach children the valuable lessons of leadership and good sportsmanship. Induction into the PYA's Hall of Fame is reserved for those unique and caring individuals who have given so much to the support to the program over the years.

Three most unique and dedicated individuals, Bob Busby, Jack Eaton, and Vinnie Sombrotto will be so honored by induction into the Port Washington Youth Activities Hall of Fame. Bob Busby has been a significant contributor through his service as wrestling coach, commissioner, and director for over 10 years. Jack Eaton has greatly distinguished himself in the role of officer, commissioner, and coach of the baseball and basketball teams. Vinnie Sombrotto is being cited for his athletic achievements in lacrosse at the collegiate and professional levels. Many of his skills and dedication were developed in his active days as a youth in PYA football and lacrosse programs.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House to join with me and rise to honor these community members for their individual and collective contributions to youth sports and all they embody. They are an excellent reflection upon themselves, their families, their community, and the volunteer spirit of American volunteer groups. They are most deserving of this great honor.

## STATEMENT BY KAILEAH CHRISTIE, GAILER SCHOOL, MIDDLEBURY, VT REGARDING DEMOCRACY AND STUDENT PARTICIPATION

**HON. BERNARD SANDERS**

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 4, 1997*

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of my colleagues I would like to have printed in the RECORD this statement by a high school student from Gailer School in Vermont, who was speaking at my recent town meeting on issues facing young people:

Ms. CHRISTIE. Good afternoon, Mr. Sanders. There are many high school students in Vermont between the ages of 14 and 17 who are not receiving the leadership skills they require to become like insightful world citizens in our society. It is required that governments and communities do as much as they possibly can to enhance these skills so that when we do become adults we can be productive.

Our school is the Gailer School in Middlebury and we are a small private school. We have been a member of a group called the Coalition of essential Schools since 1994 and we are the only school in Vermont that is a member. This coalition encourages student leadership. In December I started writing grants on trying to send a group of students from Gailer out to the coalition because they value the student leadership and we have been working with others or we are attempting contacts to work with other schools, but we have not found other schools in Vermont.

Vermont has—I have not noticed in other schools major leadership opportunities available for students. The most leadership I have seen, I was in public school in 7th grade and there was a school government, but majority of the talk was about having more dances or like pizza on Fridays.

And I realize that the Student Congressional Town Meeting is a very good start, it is giving students a chance to come and voice their opinions and make sure they are heard and we need to include more, and I thank you for having this.

An option that I have thought of is there would be one student from each county who could stay in steady contact with you, and that student would talk to other students in their county about issues that are in-house, that affect students, like year-round schooling or drug legalization, any of those issues, and they would report back to you what students think of those issues so that way you would have a better idea of how to represent the issues that deal with students more than parents or more than adults, or so that you can know how to deal with issues that really only affect whomever they affect, as long as they affect students. And I would be willing to develop this idea further and put it into a formal proposal if it is something in which you are interested.

I realize that for many people 14 is a young age, but I am almost 15 and I will soon be an adult, I will be the age of 18. And when those adults are older and retired they are depending on me to be a productive citizen and how can I be a productive citizen if you try and restrain my abilities to succeed as much as I can no matter what my age is.

Our school has a decision-making body called the school forum. In our school forum there are six students, one from each grade, grades 7 through 9, and all of the teachers and faculty. In the forum students have an equal say as the teachers and in a sense we are running the school and it has worked out very well. Whenever there is basically curriculum change, a suggestion as to how we should deal with the disciplinary process to how we should make decisions in the forum, those students in that room at that time have the same say or power as the teachers and they are valued just as much.

I think if you encourage and help students develop those leadership skills then they can run the school with adults, not by themselves.

## TRIBUTE TO DR. LESLIE SINGER

**HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 4, 1997*

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, It gives me great pleasure to congratulate Dr. Leslie Singer on receiving the 1997 Indiana University-Northwest Chancellor's Distinguished Service Award. This award was presented to Dr. Singer earlier this spring in recognition of his lifetime of service to Indiana University-Northwest.